In the Claims

I claim:

1. In a siding system including at least one siding strip having a first receiver, said siding strip partially covering an external wall of a building or dwelling, a component for intended use in covering at least an exposed portion of the wall and receiving a first portion of a utility-related structure, comprising:

a body for attachment adjacent to the siding strip for at least partially covering the exposed portion of the wall, said body including an integral fastener for engaging the first receiver in the siding strip and an opening having a predetermined shape and size for receiving the first portion of the utility-related structure.

2. The component according to claim 1, wherein an engagement surface surrounds the opening in the body, said engagement surface being substantially planar for at least partially engaging a second portion of the utility-related structure, such as a mounting tab for a socket, a face plate, or a cover.

3. The component according to claim 1, wherein an engagement surface surrounds the opening in the body, said engagement surface being substantially parallel to the wall for at least partially engaging a second portion of the utility-related structure, such as a mounting tab for a socket, a face plate, or a cover.

4. The component according to claim 1, wherein said body comprises one or more fastener receiving apertures provided in said body, whereby a non-integral fastener may be placed through one of said fastener receiving apertures for assisting in supporting the body adjacent to the wall.

5. The component according to claim 1, wherein the body further includes at least one hole adjacent to the opening for receiving a non-integral fastener for assisting in securing a second utility-related structure, such as a face plate or cover, to the body.

6. The component according to claim 1, wherein the body further includes an integral portion having a surface that simulates the appearance of grout or chinking between the component and an adjacent siding strip.

7. The component according to claim 1, wherein the integral fastener includes an outwardly directed surface that simulates the appearance of grout or chinking between the at least one siding strip and an adjacent siding strip.

8. The component according to claim 1, wherein the siding system including a second siding strip having a second receiver, said second siding strip partially covering the external wall, and the body including at least two integral fasteners, each fastener for engaging a respective one of the receivers in each of said siding strips.

9. The component according to claim 1, wherein an adjacent siding strip includes a structure for engaging the component, and said body further includes:

a plate-like portion for receiving a fastener for attaching the body to the wall; and

a receiver for receiving the engagement structure of the adjacent siding strip.

10. The component according to claim 1, wherein at least a portion of said body is outwardly bowed to simulate the appearance of a log or timber.

11. The component according to claim 1, wherein the opening is initially occupied by at least one frangible portion of the body that is removed before passing a portion of the first utility-related structure through the opening.

12. In a siding system including at least one siding strip having a profile that is outwardly bowed to simulate the appearance of a log or timber, said siding strip partially covering an external wall of a building or dwelling, a component for intended use in covering at least an exposed portion of the wall a utility-related structure, comprising:

a body for attachment adjacent to the siding strip for at least partially covering the exposed portion of the wall, said body also having a profile that is outwardly bowed relative to a vertical plane to simulate the appearance of a log or timber and an opening having a predetermined shape and size for receiving the utility-related structure.

13. The component according to claim 12, further including means for attaching the body adjacent to the wall.

14. The component according to claim 12, wherein the component overlies at least a portion of the siding strip in an installed position.

15. A siding system for at least partially covering an external wall of a dwelling or building and receiving a portion of a utility-related structure, comprising:

at least one siding strip fastened to and covering at least a portion

of the wall, said siding strip including at least one receiver;

a component for attachment adjacent to the wall for covering at least a portion thereof left exposed by the at least one siding strip, said component including an integral fastener for engaging the receiver of the at least one siding strip and an opening having a predetermined size and shape for receiving the utility-related structure.

16. The system according to claim 15, further including one or more non-integral fasteners for assisting in attaching the siding strip adjacent to the wall, wherein the component includes one or more apertures through which each non-integral fastener is placed into engagement with the wall to support the component.

17. The system according to claim 15, wherein the component comprises first and second integral fasteners, and further including an adjacent pair of first and second siding strips, with the first siding strip including a first receiver for receiving the first integral fastener and the second siding strip includes a second receiver for receiving the second integral fastener.

18. The system according to claim 15, further including first and second adjacent siding strips, one of which includes a first surface simulating the appearance of grout or chinking between said strips, and wherein said component includes a second surface that simulates the appearance of grout or chinking for placement over the first surface in an installed position.

19. A method for at least partially covering an external wall of a building or dwelling and assisting in supporting a utility-related structure adjacent to a siding strip including a first receiver, comprising in any order:

securing a component adjacent to the wall by placing a first integral fastener of the component in the first receiver of the siding strip, said component at least partially covering an exposed portion of the wall;

forming an opening having a predetermined shape and size in the component for receiving a first portion of the utility-related structure; and

passing the first portion of the utility-related structure through the opening.

20. The method according to claim 19, wherein the component includes a frangible portion, and the step of forming an opening in the component includes removing the frangible portion.

21. The method according to claim 19, wherein the component includes an engagement surface surrounding the opening, and the method further includes placing a second portion of the utility related structure in engagement with said surface.

22. The method according to claim 19, wherein the step of securing the component includes placing one or more non-integral fasteners through the component into the wall.

23. The method according to claim 20, further including a second siding strip including a second receiver, said second siding strip positioned adjacent to the at least one siding strip, and wherein the step of securing the component includes placing the first fastener of the component in engagement with the first receiver and placing a second integral fastener of the component in engagement with the second receiver in the second siding strip.